

Pedestrian Safety Program Components

Current Initiatives

New Sidewalk and Bikeway Construction

Construction of new sidewalks and bikeways under the Annual Sidewalks Program: this activity builds new sidewalks throughout the County, serving to connect existing sidewalks and completing the incomplete pedestrian network. In FY12, a small-scale pilot to assess the pedestrian connectivity within a high pedestrian-trafficked area is also proposed in this initiative. These activities are in fulfillment of **Strategy 2** of the County Executives Pedestrian Safety Initiative (CE Initiative.) In addition to this Annual Sidewalks Program, specific Sidewalk/Bikeway Capital Projects (i.e. Seven Locks Road and Falls Road) are also constructed under separate, “stand alone” CIP projects.

Safe Routes to School (SRTS)

One of the oldest components of the County’s pedestrian safety program, this program was started by the County in 2002 and has subsequently been augmented with Federal Safe Routes to School grant funding. Part of **Strategy 2** of the CE Initiative, the program evaluates schools needing improvements to pedestrian pathways, and combines targeted engineering, education, and enforcement actions to improve the safety of students walking or biking to school. Engineering actions include modified signage at schools, restricted turn movements and parking, enhanced crossing locations and improved sidewalks.

Traffic Calming

Highly effective and popular pedestrian safety program, speeds of traffic are lowered by modifications to the roadway, designed to narrow - - or appear to narrow - - roadways so that motorists’ perceived safe driving speeds are at or close to the posted speed limits. Program includes use of bulb-outs and pedestrian refuge islands, along with curb line and road shoulder modifications and limited use of speed humps (more controversial.) Enhanced pedestrian crossing locations and bus stop improvements are often incorporated into the projects, as well as ADA modifications to pedestrian pathways. Some spot improvements of intersections to improve pedestrian safety are also addressed with this program.

HIAs: Targeted Engineering, Education, Enforcement

Strategy 1 of the CE Initiative, this program targets engineering, education, and enforcement actions at locations documented as having a higher incidence of pedestrian collisions. State roadways have been primarily identified as top HIAs; project requires coordination with MSHA and has experienced delays in implementation. Seven HIAs have been evaluated so far with multiple identified improvements either implemented or in various stages of development and design.

Speed & Red Light Camera Programs

Identified as part of **Strategy 7** in the CE Initiative - - perhaps the most controversial but most successful of the pedestrian safety programs, automated traffic enforcement captures photos of vehicles traveling in excess of 12 mph over the speed limit and not stopping at red lights. Fines are mailed to registered owners of the vehicles. The revenue stream from fines are used to finance public safety expenditures, including pedestrian safety programs. Where employed, reductions in travel speeds, red-light running, and collisions have been well documented.

Assessment and Upgrades of Pedestrian Signals

Pedestrian crossing signals have traditionally been timed at pedestrians crossing at 4.0 feet per second - - a speed too fast for the very young, aged, or those with mobility impairments. Standard signal timing has been changed to 3.5 feet per second. This program, defined as **Strategy 5** in the CE Initiative, assesses the timing of signals at all 750+ signalized intersections within the County and modifies them to afford longer crossing times (usually a few extra seconds per signal sequence) in compliance with the current standard. The program must be coordinated with other signal timing modifications so as to afford a continued coordinated sequencing of traffic signals, to which Montgomery County is accustomed. Count-down pedestrian signals have now been installed at all County-owned signals.

New Streetlight Projects (additional streetlights/CBD Upgrades and In-fill/small scale projects)

MCDOT is currently upgrading streetlights within CBDs, and installing small scale projects to provide in-fill where gaps in existing lighting occur. Opportunities to incorporate improved and major new street lighting under highway and infrastructure improvements are being sought under cost-sharing with the State. Two new streetlight projects are currently being jointly funded by MSHA and the County: MD 355 at Montrose and MD 124 at Woodfield Road and Airpark. There are no new major cost-sharing projects being planned. Enhancing street lighting is *Strategy 6* of the CE Initiative.

Additional and Upgraded Crosswalks

As defined under *Strategy 2* of the CE Initiative, the improved installation and maintenance of new and existing crosswalks is vital for pedestrian safety. Crossing locations are where pedestrians are most at risk of collision. Crosswalks must be monitored and replaced based on their retro-reflectivity and the percentage of intact markings. Maintenance of crosswalks is considered a core operational service of the Traffic Engineering and Operations Division.

New Initiatives (Currently Unfunded)

APS Signal Upgrades (County Intersections)

To resolve an ADA complaint, MSHA is modifying all State intersections to be fully compliant with ADA requirements. This involves the reconstruction and reconfiguration of pedestrian crossing facilities at signalized intersections to include the installation of accessible pedestrian signals (APS.) The County needs to be in compliance with ADA also. Currently the County installs APS with all new signals and any reconstructions. But the County should have a proactive program, similar to MSHA's, to install APS at signalized intersections for which no other work is planned. The next opportunity to pursue will be part of the FY 13-18 CIP. This need is identified under *Strategy 5* of the CE Initiative.

Pedestrian Network Assessment and Analysis

There is currently no comprehensive record or assessment of the County's current sidewalks and pedestrian pathways - including crossing facilities. This makes it difficult to identify where new sidewalk installations, upgrades, and new crossing facilities are most needed - resulting in the current program being primarily a "response to requests," program. As specified in *Strategy 2* of the CE Initiative, an analysis of the pedestrian network is needed to be able to target improvements where they are most needed and will serve the County's most critical needs. To initiate this effort, a pilot of limited area should be surveyed and assessed for pedestrian network deficiencies; if successful in targeting improvements, the pilot could be used to employ the practice in a wider area. This is proposed to be performed under the existing Annual Sidewalks program, under the "planning and design" function (see above)

County-wide Education for Drivers and Pedestrians

Though not part of the CE Initiative, MCDOT originally had proposed an aggressive 5-year campaign, modeled on the education effort in Miami-Dade, where significant reductions in pedestrian collisions were realized. Annual efforts using a multi-media campaign would increase activities from this effort, including the need to hire or contract additional staff. This program would implement a county-wide education effort targeting both drivers and pedestrians, to make them aware of safe, legal behaviors that improve pedestrian safety.

New Streetlight Projects (Large Scale and Joint Projects)

Two new large-scale streetlight projects are currently being jointly funded by MSHA and the County: MD 355 at Montrose and MD 124 at Woodfield Road and Airpark. While there are no new major cost-sharing projects being planned, money for future large scale projects should be earmarked for when opportunities become available. Providing matching funds to SHA projects is defined in *Strategy 6* of the CE Initiative.